

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 HAMILT 00376 192346Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 DHA-02 IO-13 /074 W  
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P 191922Z AUG 77  
FM AMCONSUL HAMILTON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2509  
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L HAMILTON 376  
E.O. 11652; GDS  
TAGS: PINT,PFOR,BD,UK

SUBJECT: BERMUDA'S PREMIER RESIGNS  
REF: HAMILTON A-4 AND PREVIOUS

1. THE PREMIER, SIR JOHN SHARPE, AT A HASTILY CALLED NEWS CONFERENCE AT NOON TODAY, ANNOUNCED HIS RESIGNATION EFFECTIVE AUGUST 26. THE ACTION WAS NOT UNEXPECTED, EXCEPT FOR THE TIMING. OBSERVERS HERE OF THE INTERNAL CONFLICT WITHIN THE UNITED BERMUDA PARTY(UBP)OVER THE PAST TEN MONTHS(INCLUDING MEMBERS OF THE CABINET)HAD LEARNED THAT SHARPE HAD AGREED TO STEP DOWN SHORTLY AFTER THE ARRIVAL IN EARLY SEPTEMBER OF BERMUDA'S NEW GOVERNOR.

2.PREMIER'S PRECIPITOUS DECISION WAS ANNOUNCED AT TERMINATION OF PARTY CAUCUS MEETING THIS MORNING AT WHICH MEMBERS HAD FINALIZED PROCEDURES FOR SELECTING A PREMIER IN ALL FUTURE CHANGES OF LEADERSHIP. FUTURE CANDIDATES FOR POSITION MUST HAVE FOUR SPONSORS FROM UBP HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY MEMBERSHIP. SELECTION OF CANDIDATE WILL BE BY SIMPLE MAJORITY OF ALL UBP HOUSE MEMBERS.

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3. SLATE OF CANDIDATES FOR THIS GO-ROUND MUST BE CERTIFIED BY AUGUST 23, AND ELECTION WILL BE HELD ON MORNING OF AUGUST 26. IN THE EVENT OF 12-12 DEADLOCK(THE SPEAKER IS NOT PERMITTED TO VOTE),A 72 HOUR COOLING-OFF PERIOD HAS BEEN PROVIDED FOR, AFTER WHICH A FINAL BALLOT IS TO BE HELD. MOST LIKELY CANDIDATES TO APPEAR ON AUGUST 23 SLATE ARE: QUINTIN EDNESS(MINISTER OF

PUBLIC WORKS), D AVID GIBBONS (MINISTER OF FINANCE), AND C.V. (JIM) WOOLRIDGE, FORMER CABINET MEMBER WHO HAS BEEN A LEADER OF THE DISSIDENT GROUP DEMANDING SHARPE'S RESIGNATION.

4. IT IS GENERAL KNOWLEDGE THAT SHARPE AND HIS DWINDLING GROUP OF SUPPORTERS IN CABINET WILL PUSH FOR QUIN-TIN EDNESS, WHO HAS BEEN A SHARPE PROTEGE FOR YEARS. EDNESS, WHO IS MOST CHARISMATIC OF BLACK CONTENDERS, IS PLAGUED BY REPUTATION FOR BEING INEFFICIENT AND A WOMANIZER. GIBBONS, WHO IS THE FALL-BACK CHOICE OF THE SHARPE GROUP, IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED TO BE THE BRIGHTEST AND BEST ADMINISTRATOR, BUT IS HAMPERED BY WHITE, CONSERVATIVE, FRONT-STREET IMAGE WHICH MANY CONSIDER WOULD BE A DISASTROUS CHOICE AT THIS TIME. DISSIDENT GROUP AND ITS SUPPORTERS, WHICH AT LATEST COUNT FALLS JUST SHORT OF A MAJORITY, WILL BACK WOOLRIDGE, WHO IS BLACK BUT WHO ALSO HAS SPOTTY RECORD OF INEFFICIENCY IN PREVIOUS CABINET POSITIONS. A COMPROMISE POSSIBILITY IS MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION AND LABOR JOHN SWAN, WHO ALTHOUGH HE HAS BEEN AN ENIGMA TO DISSIDENT GROUP, IS BLACK, INTELLIGENT AND PROVEN TO BE AN EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATOR DURING SIX MONTHS IN CABINET.

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PINT, PFOR, BD, UK, (SHARPE, JOHN)  
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